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AN IMPORTANT ELECTION.

The discussion of candidates for governor of New York state has already begun in great earnestness, and in fact is a sharp reminder of the extremely important influence that nominations for state and other offices will have on the electoral tickets in this commonwealth, says the New York Commercial. What applies to New York state in this respect applies, of course, to all other states. The character of the nominations in question may easily mean the triumph or defeat of President Roosevelt or of Judge Parker.

In New York state next fall we are to elect not only a governor, a lieutenant governor, a secretary of state, a state treasurer, a state comptroller, an attorney general and a state engineer and surveyor, but likewise 37 members of the house of representatives and a new state senate and assembly consisting together of 200 members. In addition, the new legislature is to choose a United States senator to succeed Chauncey M. Depew; a number of supreme court justices are to be chosen, and many counties will elect judges, surrogates, district attorneys and so on.

This is a formidable list, and it serves to show how utterly preposterous are predictions as to the result of the forthcoming election in this state that are based merely on the personalities and careers of the republican and the democratic presidential candidates and the national platforms on which they stand. This state is quite generally regarded at present to be a close state and an unwise nomination for governor or a few unwise nominations for members of congress or unwise county nominations or the adoption of an unwise state platform in relation to state issues might readily turn promising prospects of victory into defeat all along the line for one or the other of the great political parties. It should always be borne in mind that there is a marked tendency on the part of the average American voter to vote a straight ticket—particularly on general issues. A very little dissatisfaction with the party ticket he usually supports is apt to send him completely over to the other side or to cause him to stay away from the polls.

It is often deplored that the election of such a multiplicity and variety of state and local officers should occur at the same time as the election of a president and vice president of the United States, but on the whole this system is clearly for the best. It compels national political leaders and managers to interest themselves in the selection of state and other candidates that will add strength to the national tickets, and this means generally the selection of men of clean character and conceded ability for such candidates.

Present indications are that both the republicans and democrats of the Empire state are not going to take any chances this year in the way of putting forward objectionable or questionable nominees for the various state and minor elective offices that are to be filled. Too much is at stake.

TEACH CHILDREN TO SWIM.

In view of the commendable effort now about to be carried to success in Astoria looking to the establishment of a permanent swimming place, the following editorial utterance from the San Francisco Examiner will be read with interest:

Of the human beings drowned or burned on the General Slocum several hundreds would have been saved had they known how to swim, even a little. Swimming should be taught in the public schools. The learning of it should be made compulsory, like the learning of reading or writing. We hope that those who control the public schools, and who spend the people's money according to their will or their whims, will kindly consider this suggestion.

In the first place, it is necessary to know how to swim—very necessary in an age when the man whose inspection should make a boat safe is bribed, and a thousand women and children are dumped into the water for a small financial consideration.

Country children can teach themselves to swim in ponds or brooks. But the children of the big

city have not such opportunities. It is certainly the business of the public schools to teach children whatever they should know. They should know how to swim—and the public school should teach them how.

Of course this would involve a certain expense. It would be necessary to have swimming pools attached to the public schools. But what is to prevent the construction of such swimming pools?

Every great city has its one or two or more athletic and social clubs. These include a gymnasium, a swimming pool and rooms for social recreation. What the private athletic club offers to its limited number of members the public schools in great cities should offer to the children of the public schools everywhere.

The children should find happiness, health and, above all, social interests in the public schools. The carpenter's son should look back to his public school days as affectionately as the college man looks back to his alma mater.

If any politician cares to be eccentric, and to act as if he were interested in those who elected him, let him go to work to realize this suggestion to teach swimming to public school children, and improve the social aspects of public school life.

VACATIONS—STRENUOUS AND RELAXED.

Russell Sage thinks that a vacation is little less than an extortion from the employer, and asks what employees would think if the boot were on the other foot, and they were expected to give two weeks of each year free, says the Saturday Evening Post. He himself never took a vacation, and neither, he says, did any of the men who made their way in the world along with him—implying that they were all a fine lot. A distinguished New York nerve specialist, on the other hand, says that two weeks is not enough for the busy American business man to recover his wasted forces, and advises four. President Roosevelt, by his example, commends the strenuous life by forest and field to restore the balance of a physique worn out by the nervous strain of city life. Others say that this is burning the candle at both ends, advocating vacation as a sort of rest cure, the chief requisites of which are sleep, indolence and food. Their example is Mr. A. J. Balfour, the British prime minister, now in vacation on the coast of Normandy, whose breakfast is a cup of chocolate taken in bed, whose most strenuous physical exertion is golf, and whose most exciting mental experience is bridge. The elder Dumas, according to his horrified son, recruited himself from gigantic labors by the orgies of an ogre—and thrived in body and mind, if not in morals. A distinguished Englishman of letters, knighted for his public services and intrusted by the Times with important responsibilities, stated in Who's Who some years ago that his favorite recreation was "a change of work." His morals were no doubt conserved; but a year later he was a mental and physical wreck, living indefinitely in Egypt, where, it is to be hoped, he was able to eat of the lotus.

The upshot of all this! That the vacation should fit the man, as the punishment fits the crime. If the president of the United States were to try a share of the prime minister's chocolate, golf and bridge he would doubtless explode; whereas, if the Englishman were to try the American plan it might shake the foundations of belief. The elder Dumas never could have been playwright and romanticist if he had made himself the slave of his study-desk. Russell Sage would not have lent *eclect* to the orgies of Dumas *pere*, or derived solace from them. It is far from certain that he would be able to derive profit from vacation of any sort—for, in order that a man may vacate, there has to be something in his mind except business; otherwise he becomes the abhorred vacuum, and vacation corrodes him worse than business. Men who know themselves, as Socrates advised, know what vacations are best for them. Others will find out when they get into the hands of the un-Socratic specialist.

In the domain of the home women have, for countless generations, been distinguished as executives. The home is still woman's throne, though it is no longer her kingdom. Women are using other units than the domestic as a means of influencing public opinion and of promoting public movements. In the comparatively new field of the club—domestic, social, literary—women prove their great executive worth. In all such movements as the Young Women's Christian Association are seen their ability, both in raising money generously and in spending it with efficient economy. In cities, too, women are found at the heads of immense grammar schools, having a thousand and more pupils and 20 or more teachers. In at least one city and more than one state, at certain times, a woman has been superintendent of the whole public school system. In all domains, however, women are coming to prove their ability as efficient executives, not for a brief time, but as a form of permanent service.

General Kuropatkin, reporting to the czar the disaster to the expedition which met such terrible defeat at Mo Tien pass, says the Russian troops retreated "step by step." It is reassuring to know that the troops did not retreat two steps at a time.

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Cigars and How to Smoke Them.

Buy none but new cigars, the newer the better. Old cigars that are dry and brittle are avoided in those countries and among people where smoking is a second nature.

Leave the ash on your cigar until it falls off. A cigar not only burns more evenly while the ash remains, but it lasts longer and tastes better.

If your cigar goes out be sure to blow through it as soon as possible. You will see some dead smoke leave it. That would become stale, and make your cigar stale if left in.

You cannot tell whether a cigar is good or bad unless you light it properly—that is to say thoroughly.

Do not smoke too much, and do not smoke a good cigar while you are out of doors.

If you think smoking is injurious to your health, stop smoking in the early morning. Two-thirds of the people of this country have their stomachs out of order, and no man ailing that way can smoke in the early morning before or after breakfast.—Merchants' Journal.

Tobacco Before Art.

George Dance, having run the Richmond theater for a year and a half, has decided to turn it into a high-class music hall. "It is not so much," said Mr. Dance in an interview, "with the idea of running a music hall, but rather with a view of having a place of entertainment where men can smoke, that I have decided on a change."

"This, it must be understood, does not imply drinking."

"If we could have a theater where smoking was permitted, I should have no wish to change mine into a music hall. But I feel that this prohibition of smoking is at the bottom of the reason for the present bad time most theaters are passing through."—London Express.

Cannot Change Nature Spots.

Washington has a wing to its state house, apparently, the plumage of which no naturalist can classify, and the commission refuses to accept it until restored to the quarry tint. Which is eminently correct. The man who essays to alter with his puny acid bottle the shading nature has expended centuries in spreading through solid rock deserves no better fate than to have to wipe away the telltale stain.—Aberdeen Bulletin.

Children should not be allowed to play on the premises of other people when those people are absent from their home. It is nothing more nor less than trespassing, and this city came near being the scene of a disastrous fire this week from the very cause that boys were playing with fire in a place they had no business to be.—Roslyn Miner.

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